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Semi-Weekly Interior Journal

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## RANDOM REMINISCENCES

### Of The Long Ago.

#### AN HISTORICAL BURGEO.

Hastily Cooked Without Any Seasoning.

BY JOHN BLAIN.

[For The Interior Journal.]

My periodical spell of *carpetbag reminiscences* has come on me again, and if you and your readers are to suffer by it you must take the blame, for you will know I contracted the malady by association with the *INTERIOR JOURNAL*. Taking advantage of my innate, and, therefore, innocent vanity, you have by printing my effusions from time to time, flattered me into the insane belief that I am a full-blown Bohemian. I was once a modest, unobtrusive, reasonable being, Walton, and for that had acquired some respectability; but, now, see what I have come to! And all this, I repeat, you are responsible for, because it was you that "turned my head." There is a pleasing element of justice in the case, however, and that is, the fact that your subscribers, may, at their pleasure, read or skip my compositions, but you have to read them, willing or unwilling, and read them carefully, at that. But crazy as I confess myself to be, I am not willing that it shall be inferred from the circumstance of these historical burlesques being written annually, that it has taken me a whole year to create the contents of this paper. I beg you to believe that it has been gotten up in rapid haste and put together without method or study, and with the most absolute disregard of all the laws of rhetoric, logic, grammar, orthography, etymology, syntax and common sense.

#### ELECTIONS IN OLD TIMES.

The oldest poll-book in Lincoln county Clerk's office, is dated in 1824. Why the books for previous elections are not here, I do not certainly know, but I presume they were sent to Frankfort under the law of that date. Those in the office dated prior to 1832, are so mildewed and defaced as to be scarcely legible. I have examined the books for the Presidential election in 1832—the race between Clay and Jackson—with some interest. It shows that there were then but three voting places in the county, viz: Stanford, Crab Orchard and McKenzie's (now Waynesburg.) Whether the county was then, as now, divided into election districts, or whether citizens had the right to vote at any precinct, according to their choice, I am not informed. This election, as were all elections at that period, was continued three days, being held on the 5th, 6th and 7th days of November. The Stanford book shows that the citizens of that part of the county now included in the Turnersville and Hustonville precincts voted at Stanford. This fact is indicated by the names of the voters with which I am familiar.

The officers of the election on that occasion were: At Stanford, Martin A. Stenhouse and Christian Engleman, Judges, and Robert Miller, Clerk; at Crab Orchard, A. Perrin and J. P. Bryant, Judges, and John B. Hall, Clerk; and at McKenzie's, Lewis Ball and Richard Singleton, Judges, James Eubanks, Clerk, and Alfred Hocker, Sheriff. Of these gentlemen, I presume the only survivor is Capt. James Eubanks, who now lives in the Stanford district, with his son, B. F. Eubanks. The Captain, tho' best with age, being eighty-eight years old, is quite a lively, bright old man, and is yet able to attend to his business affairs better than the average young man of the present day. He fought under Jackson at New Orleans, and as evidence that he did his duty as a soldier, he received an honorable discharge from the army and is now drawing a pension for his services.

The whole number of votes taken in the county at that election was 1198, of which Clay received 768, and Jackson 340. At Stanford, Clay received 561, Jackson 243; at Crab Orchard, Clay 175, Jackson 56; and at McKenzie's Clay 32, and Jackson

41. So McKenzie's precinct stood alone for "Old Hickory," giving him a votes majority. The first man to cast his vote at Stanford was John McRoberts, who gave it for Clay; the first at Crab Orchard was S. Johnston also for Clay, and at McKenzie's, Andrew Wheelon led off for his namesake, Andrew Jackson.

#### THE PIONEERS BULL-DOZING.

It appears that bull-dozing was not invented in Louisiana in 1876, as the Radicals suppose, but was successfully practiced on the "dark and bloody ground" more than 100 years ago. This is made evident by the records of a suit in the County Court in which one James Lytle, or Lytle—it is spelled both ways—was plaintiff and John Martin, was defendant. In this case Lytle sued Martin for assault and battery, putting his damages at 2,000 pounds. The facts in the case appear to have been these: In 1780 at Hart's Station, near Banesborough, a "Trunk of Money" was stolen from one Daniel Johnston. James Lytle and his wife, Isabel, were accused of the theft and brought before Col. Calloway, who was a Justice of the Peace, for trial; and upon the investigation it appeared evident that the accused were guilty, and Col. Calloway, so a witness stated, "recommended Lytle to pay Johnston for the trunk and contents," which L. refused to do, and then the Colonel ordered Martin, as Sheriff, to summon a posse and take Lytle and his wife to some place where they should be "well whipt." This order was obeyed, Lytle receiving 70 or 80 lashes. Whilst he was being whipped he cried out that it was more than he could bear, and asked his wife to go and get the trunk, but she refused, saying, "she knew not which of the negroes to go to to get it." Martin, one witness, said, "swore by the living God he would kill him if he did not produce the trunk." Martin did not do all the whipping, but he and his posse all participated, taking it by turns. After the whipping was over, a compromise was effected by which Lytle was to give Danl. Johnston three horses for his "trunk and money," provided, he (Johnston) would not prosecute Isabel for false swearing on the trial. Notwithstanding this settlement, Lytle afterwards brought the suit for damage, and upon the trial the jury gave him a verdict for two pounds and one penny.

Col. Calloway was quite a distinguished man at that day, being both a Justice of the Peace and a Colonel of Militia, and at the time of the occurrence here related, was in command of the garrison at Hart's Station. Two of his daughters and a daughter of Daniel Boone's, all young girls, while on a visit to Logan's Fort, near Stanford, being out for a short distance from the fort amusing themselves (skating perhaps,) were suddenly rushed upon by a party of Indians, and captured, and carried off. The Indians were pursued by Col. Floyd and Danl. Boone and others, and overtaken at a distance of about 40 miles, and the girls rescued in safety. This occurred in 1776. Calloway was a compeer of Boone, Logan, Kenton and the other pioneer heroes of the time, and was a brave, gallant man. Although his judicial conduct in the case narrated was a little irregular, yet in view of the troublesome times, and the heinousness of the offence and the justice of the punishment inflicted, I will not condemn him. Really, Lytle got the best of it any how; for who wouldn't give three little scrub horses and take 70 or 80 lashes for a "trunk of money?"

#### THE MEANING OF AIRE TERM "GENTLEMAN," RATHER MIXED.

In the old Court records the proceedings at every term are so headed as to show who held the Court, thus: "Present: John Logan, Hugh McGary and John Bowman, *Gentlemen*." And in all instances where a Justice is mentioned in the records, the word, gentleman, is written after his name. Whether this was meant to signify that those persons were gentlemen in the sense that they were persons of the male persuasion merely, or that they were gentlemen in the present common acceptance of the word, or whether it was a title of honor used as we now use the term, "Esquire," is a puzzle which I can't work out to my entire satisfaction. I guess it would be reasonably safe to say it was not used in the sense first mentioned, "John," "Hugh," &c. suggest that they were not ladies, plainly enough without adding the word, gentleman, for the purpose. I was much inclined to think it was employed to indi-

cate that the person to whose name it was appended was in very truth an "old Virginia gentleman" of the first quality, until I discovered among the records an expression which rather upset that view of it. I found that in the year 1783, Hugh McGary was tried in the County Court for "betting and winning a mare worth 12 pounds," and upon being found guilty by the jury, the Court recorded its judgment in these uncomplimentary words: "It is the opinion of the Court that said Hugh McGary, Gentleman, be deemed an infamous Gambler, and that he shall not be eligible to any office of trust or honor in this State." If the Court understood itself, as Courts always do, it certainly didn't mean to say that Hugh was a first-class gentleman, as we use the word, and that he was at the same time an infamous character—too infamous in point of fact to ever be trusted or honored again by his fellow citizens. Then, I could hardly believe the Court would so far forget its dignity as to use the term gentleman ironically—use it for the purpose of abusing the unfortunate defendant. It seemed to me that the sentence, taken in its most humane and merciful sense, was hard enough without adding sarcasm and sneers to its terms. To be solemnly proclaimed in Court an infamous gambler, and to be forever quashed and extinguished as a politician, just for "betting and winning a mare worth 12 pounds," was certainly enough for the Court to say and enough for it to mean by the language of its edict. So, I take the ground for the time being—subject to correction upon further evidence—that "gentleman" as used in 1783, in the connection named, was only a descriptive word referring to the official position of the person after whose name it was written.

By the way, this same Hugh McGary was one of the Justices, who, in January, 1781, organized at Harrodsburg, the first Court ever held for Lincoln county; and he was a member of the Court, though not on the bench at the time, which pronounced the cruel judgment referred to. He continued to serve in that capacity, in spite of that misfortune, for many years afterwards, and no doubt was a first rate man. I am sorry that I was under the necessity of telling this tale on him in order to throw light on a very serious and difficult question. I should not have done so, even for that laudible purpose, except in his absence. Knowing that he left the county and the world about 75 years ago, I thought there would be no danger of losing his vote by reciting this bit of history. But, for fear he might by some mistake come back again, I will add as my candid opinion, that whatever may have been his faults and weaknesses, he was all his life an Irishman, "intirely," which is as high a compliment as I could pay to any one.

#### THE DUTCH OVENS.

Almost every family, in the times I write about, had what was called a "dutch oven." This, as I understand, was a contrivance for baking bread constructed somewhat in the form of a furnace and made of brick and burnt clay, and not unlike the baker's oven of the present time. The almost universal use of this peculiar apparatus was doubtless owing to necessity, as the ordinary cooking implements were hard to get and, of course, very costly. In that early day, when everything was done "by main strength and awkwardness," iron and every thing made of it were much dearer than now. It was long before labor-saving inventions had made much headway in any part of the "new world," and besides such articles as skillets, ovens, kettles, &c., even if they could be bought at a moderate price in Virginia, had to be transported on pack horses hundreds of miles through "the wilderness," and consequently were rated extremely high by those fortunate enough to possess them. To show this I give some examples of the prices of these utensils which I have gleaned from sale bills filed with estate papers. One pot £2 10s, equal to \$3.33; four old iron kettles and four old pots £20, equal to \$66.66; 100 pounds castings at £7, equal to 233 cents per pound. These sales occurred in 1783. Sales in 1781 show far more enormous prices; for instance, a frying pan and pot rack brought £30, or \$300! This may have been the value estimated in depreciated currency, but the record gives us no such intimation, and there are a great many sales recorded at prices just as extravagant as that I have mentioned.

In all the inventories of that date an account is taken of the decedent's wearing apparel, and they indicate that while but few, if any, could dress so elegantly and so often as Clough, they all followed pretty much

the same style, a leading feature of which was the short pants with knee buckles and long stockings. Many of them wore hunting shirts for coats, and not a few strutted in leather breeches. Our grand-daddies seem to have had very scant libraries. Among their books I notice the following: The Spectator, The Old Author, The Bible, A large Law Book, The Virginia Justice, Book of Divinity and Arithmetic. Frequently the Bible constitutes the entire library, which none can deny was a solid and safe kind of literature to keep about the house, and afforded a field of study wide enough for the greatest and most ambitious intellects.

#### THE BARNHART PLOW.

It is plainly apparent from the cuttings I have given that our forefathers were not richly provided with farming tools, and that their agricultural operations were performed with implements of a decidedly primitive and inferior quality. Among the rest—and a very important article it was, too—was the Barnhart plow. This was the plow used for breaking up land, and was, or rather would be now, a curiosity. I remember seeing it in operation when a boy, and remember it as a very cumbersome, awkwardly constructed machine, made almost entirely of wood and roughly made at that. It had a sort of iron point and a very long, straight, or nearly straight, mold board, and was a regular horse-killer and did very poor work. One of these antiquated machines placed by the side of the improved plow of the present day would strikingly exemplify the advantages that invention has conferred upon the tillers of the soil. I wonder that Geo. D. Wearen doesn't procure one of these mechanical curiosities to exhibit in contrast with his celebrated "Oliver Chilled."

#### THE GENTLEMAN FROM CORK.

I have inspected with some interest the estate of Alexander Blain (the gentleman from Cork whose "wake" was lately chronicled in the *INTERIOR JOURNAL*.) He lived where Thos. J. Robinson now resides, in the Hustonville neighborhood, and died there in 1806. He was pretty comfortably supplied with worldly goods as appears by his will in which he devised among other real estate 800 acres of land on Licking. This land, I know by tradition, was in litigation many years ago and was lost by limitation. As the lawyers phrase it, Alex. "slept on his rights" too long—was too late with his "wake." Among his personal effects I observe that he was the owner of the celebrated horse "Switch Tail," and had plenty of "dell" and pewter. All he lacked of being well fixed for living was the "dutch oven." Wake or no wake Alex. seems to have been a pretty respectable inhabitant, as he was for many years one of the dignified Justices of the county, and in 1795 was a representative in the General Assembly.

CONCLUSION. Here, at the conclusion, it was the original plan of this production to "take a flight," but while waiting, Guiteau-like, for inspiration, I have reperused what I have written and found that it is abundantly "flighty" all the way through to give full satisfaction in that regard, and, therefore, I will close with one original, patent-right remark, which is: I thank you for your polite attention and promise that if re-elected I will endeavor faithfully in the future as in the past to—(I've keeled over.)

TO PRESERVE GERANIUMS.—Some florists keep geraniums during the winter by burying them in a trench under the ground. The trench should be made in a location where no water can remain, the plants laid in by the heel, in a row, then covered with straight straw, and boards set in a ridge form, so as to carry off the water, and then covered with earth, according to the climate, to a depth sufficient to keep out the frost, finishing off in a ridge or roof shape. Others succeed by hanging their geraniums up by the roots in a cool dry cellar.

CAUSE AND EFFECT.—The main cause of nervousness in indigestion, and that is caused by weakness of the stomach. No one can have sound nerves and good health without using Hop Bitters to strengthen the stomach; purify the blood, and keep the liver and kidneys active, to carry off all the poisonous and waste matters of the system.—Advance.

WEAKNESS CURED.—Lynn, Mass., Dec. 18, 1870. I gave that valuable medicine, Brown's Iron Bitter, to my sister for weakness. After taking two bottles, she was able to walk and run as well as ever. It is certainly a wonderful tonic. WM. JONES

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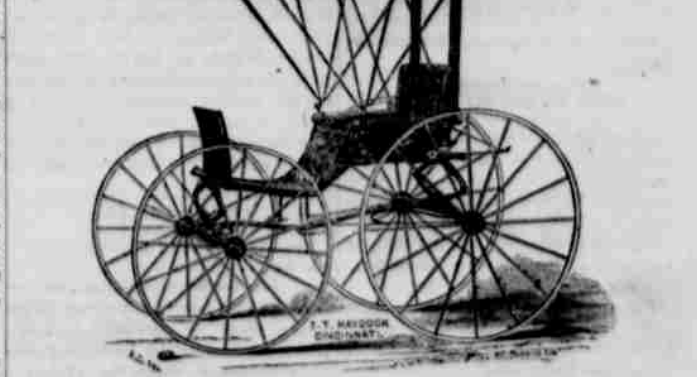
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